

REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 31st January 1891.

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LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.
BENGALI.				
<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Ahammadi"	Tangail, Mymensingh	450	12th January 1891.
2	"Hitakari"	Kushtea	30	
3	"Kasipore Nibasi"	Kasipore, Burrisal	.....	
4	"Navamihir"	Ghatail, Mymensingh	.....	12th ditto.
5	"Sahayogi"	Burrisal	.....	
6	"Uluberia Darpan"	Uluberia	.....	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
7	"Bangavasi"	Calcutta	20,000	24th ditto.
8	"Banganibasi"	Ditto	.....	23rd ditto.
9	"Burdwan Sanjivani"	Burdwan	302	20th ditto.
10	"Charuvarta"	Sherepore, Mymensingh	500	19th ditto.
11	"Dacca Prakash"	Dacca	1,200	25th ditto.
12	"Education Gazette"	Hooghly	885	23rd ditto.
13	"Gramvasi"	Ramkristopore, Howrah	800	26th ditto.
14	"Hindu Ranjika"	Beauleah, Rajshahye...	300	
15	"Murshidabad Pratinidhi"	Berhampore	.....	
16	"Navayuga"	Calcutta	.....	
17	"Pratikar"	Berhampore	600	23rd ditto.
18	"Rungpore Dikprakash"	Kakinia, Rungpore	.....	
19	"Sahachar"	Calcutta	500	21st ditto.
20	"Sakti"	Dacca	.....	20th ditto.
21	"Samaj-o-Sahitya"	Garibpore, Nuddea	.....	25th ditto.
22	"Samaya"	Calcutta	3,806	23rd ditto.
23	"Sanjivani"	Ditto	4,000	24th ditto.
24	"Sansodhini"	Chittagong	.....	
25	"Sarawat Patra"	Dacca	300	24th ditto.
26	"Som Prakash"	Calcutta	1,000	19th & 26th January 1891.
27	"Sudhakar"	Ditto	2,580	16th & 23rd ditto.
28	"Sulabh Samachar"	Ditto	.....	
29	"Surabhi-o-Pataká"	Ditto	700	
<i>Daily.</i>				
30	"Banga Vidyá Prakashika"	Calcutta	500	21st to 24th, 26th & 27th Jan. 1891.
31	"Bengal Exchange Gazette"	Ditto	.....	16th & 21st to 29th ditto.
32	"Dainik o Samachar Chandrika"	Ditto	1,500	25th to 28th ditto.
33	"Samvad Prabhakar"	Ditto	800	23 d, 24th and 26th to 29th Jan. 1891.
34	"Samvad Purnachandrodaya"	Ditto	300	23rd, 24th and 26th to 28th Jan. 1891.

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ENGLISH AND BENGALI.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
35	"Dacca Gazette"	Dacca		26th January 1891.
HINDI.				
<i>Monthly.</i>				
36	"Darjeeling Mission ke Másik Samáchar Patrika."	Darjeeling	20	15th ditto.
37	"Kshatriya Patriká"	Patna	200	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
38	"Aryávarta"	Calcutta	800	10th ditto.
39	"Behar Bandhu"	Bankipore ... ..	.....	15th & 22nd January 1891.
40	"Bhárat Mitra"	Calcutta	1,653	
41	"Champarun Chandrika"	Bettiah ... ..	.....	
42	"Desí Vyápári"	Calcutta ... ..	.....	
43	"Hindi Bangabási"	Ditto ... ..	.....	12th January 1891.
44	"Sár Sudhánidhi"	Ditto	500	
45	"Uchit Baktá"	Ditto	4,500	
PERSIAN.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
46	"Jáum-Jahánomah"	Calcutta	250	
URDU.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
47	"Aftal Alum Arrah"	Arrah	300	
48	"Al Punch"	Bankipore ... ..	.....	19th ditto.
49	"Anis"	Patna ... ..	.....	
50	"Calcutta Punch"	Calcutta ... ..	.....	
51	"Gauhur"	Ditto	196	11th ditto.
52	"Raisul-Akhbari-Moorshidabad"	Murshidabad ... ..	.....	8th, 16th, & 24th January 1891.
53	"Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat"	Calcutta	340	16th and 23rd January 1891.
URIYA.				
<i>Monthly.</i>				
54	"Asha"	Cuttack ... ..	.....	
55	"Pradíp"	Ditto ... ..	.....	
56	"Samyabadi"	Ditto ... ..	.....	
57	"Taraka and Subhavártá"	Ditto ... ..	.....	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
58	"Dipaka"	Cuttack ... ..	.....	
59	"Samvad Váhika"	Balasore	205	
60	"Urya and Navasamvád"	Ditto	600	
61	"Utkal Dípiká"	Cuttack	444	
PAPERS PUBLISHED IN ASSAM.				
BENGALI.				
<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
62	"Paridarshak"	Sylhet	450	
63	"Silchar"	Silchar	500	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
64	"Srihatta Mihir"	Sylhet ... ..	.....	19th January 1891.

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

The *Gauhar*, of the 11th January, says that the poor salaries paid to the police constables in Calcutta support the presumption that most of the thefts, pocket-pickings, &c., which take place in that town are committed in collusion with the constables who have a share in the stolen properties.

GAUHAR,
Jan. 11th, 1891.

2. The *Hitakari*, of the 12th January, says that the present corrupt condition of the police, and its conduct towards the panchayets, prevent respectable people from accepting or desiring those honorary offices. If the authorities want to make these offices attractive, they should sever all connection between the village panchayets and the police.

HITAKARI,
Jan. 12th, 1891.

Matter for the Police Commission.

Panchayets should be nominated by the village communities and appointed by the Magistrate and placed under his direct control. The pay of the chowkidars should be distributed by the panchayets, who should also be empowered to collect the road cess. Chowkidars should be appointed by the panchayets, and the panchayets shall report to the Magistrate any faults which are committed by them, and the Magistrate should, upon these reports, punish or dismiss chowkidars. The pay of chowkidars should be fixed at Rs. 5 per month, and they should not be allowed to do any private work. If respectable men become panchayets, it will be practicable for Government to vest in them greater powers than can be now entrusted to them.

3. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 16th January, has heard that the reason why no more witnesses came forward to give evidence before the Police Commission was that the Commission offended some of the witnesses examined by it by not taking down their evidence in full. Well, if the Commission is bent on acting according to its own will and pleasure, why were witnesses at all invited to give evidence? Nothing better could be expected from a Commission of which Mr. Beames is the President and Mr. Veasey is a member. If the real object of Government in appointing the Commission be to reform the police, and not simply to devise means for the preferment of Englishmen in the police service, it ought to consider the following suggestions:—

BENGAL EXCHANGE
GAZETTE,
Jan. 16th, 1891.

The Police Commission and police reform.

- (1)—Competent and educated men should be appointed as District Superintendents.
- (2)—The post of Assistant Superintendent should be abolished, and a part of the saving thus made should be applied to increasing the salaries of Inspectors. The number of Superintendents may be reduced by placing a Superintendent, not in each district, but in each division.
- (3)—Graduates and under-graduates should be largely admitted to the police service as inspectors and sub-inspectors.
- (4)—Means should be adopted to induce men of respectability to serve as panchayets.
- (5)—Chowkidars should be freed from the duty of doing *begar* work for police officers. Even the *Englishman* newspaper has testified to the fact that chowkidars are maintained simply for carrying letters between the District Superintendent and the Magistrate.
- (6)—Police officers should be prevented from burdening the people with their boarding expenses when they come on investigation.
- (7)—The system of trial by jury should be extended to the whole country, and care should be taken to choose only respectable people as jurors.

4. The *Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat*, of the 16th January, says that though the police held an enquiry on the strength of the information given to it by this paper that gambling used to go on in premises No. 15, Ram Mohan Ghosh's Lane, yet it did wrong to give out beforehand that such an enquiry was contemplated. This was warning for the gamblers, who were accordingly able to throw dust in the eyes of the police.

The Police and gambling in a house in Calcutta.

URDU GUIDE AND
DARUSSALTANAT,
Jan. 16th, 1891.

SUDHAKAR,
Jan. 16th, 1891.

5. The *Sudhakar*, of the 16th January, says that the first witness examined by the Police Commission was Rai Kunja Lal Banerji Bahadur. He gave his evidence in a fearless and independent manner. The second witness was Mr. W. H. Ryland, who appeared as a representative of the Eurasian and Anlo-Indian Defence Association. This gentleman was for some time Superintendent of Stamps and Stationery and is a retired Deputy Magistrate. His evidence was quite of a piece with his character as a Eurasian and a representative of the Defence Association. He did not even touch matters essentially connected with the subject of police reform. In giving his evidence he was only anxious to promote the interests of his own community. The third witness was Mr. D. A. B. Gomess. This gentleman followed in the footsteps of Mr. Ryland. The fourth was Mr. Walter Madge, a Eurasian. The arguments this gentleman used in support of his views were very ludicrous. His plan of reform is quite unique. The fifth witness was Baboo Janaki Nath Sen. This gentleman's evidence contained a good deal of solid matter. In fact, men acquainted with the internal affairs of the country, like Baboo Janaki Nath, are best fitted to give evidence before the Commission. The sixth witness was Baboo Hari Mohan Basu. Much of what this gentleman said has the approval of the writer.

SAKTI,
Jan. 20th, 1891.

6. A police officer writing to the *Sakti*, of the 20th January, says that the Police Commission ought at any rate to have taken the evidence of experienced police officers, who could have offered better suggestions for the reformation of the police than even the District Magistrates. As regards himself, the correspondent cannot refrain from offering some suggestions for the consideration of the Commission. The high-handedness of the police officers does not proceed either from their ignorance or from their want of education. Poor salaries are the true cause of police oppression. Vested as they are with immense power, and beset on all sides with temptations, it is a little too hard for police officers to resist the temptation of increasing their poor income by exacting money from the people with whom they have to deal. The unpleasantness of a police officer's life, coupled with the inadequacy of his remuneration, has hitherto stood in the way of educated or respectable young men entering the police service. A slight raising of salaries all round may indeed induce educated young men to enter the police service. But when such young men will realise the hardships that a police officer has to undergo in the mofussil, and will at the same time be thrown in the midst of temptations, it is difficult to say how far even they will be able to maintain those principles of honesty and conscientiousness with which they may enter the service. The correspondent suggests the following reforms in the police service:—

- (1) Uniform should be supplied to police officers free of charge.
- (2) The leave regulations of police officers ought to be altered.
- (3) Travelling allowances should be given to all police officers when going into the mofussil on investigation.

If these reforms are effected, the authorities will see that even the present personnel of the police will considerably improve in morality. The abolition of a few District Superintendentships and the utilisation of the saving thus made in giving slight increments of pay to the lower police officers will fail to do any good. But it is idle to expect that Government will undertake any reform that would be likely to tell heavily on its purse.

SAKTI.

7. The same paper says that Baboos Surendra Nath Banerji and Kali Charan Banerji abstained from giving evidence before the Police Commission because they understood that the Commission would not take their evidence in some important matters connected with the subject of police reform. All this means that the Commission is not likely to produce any beneficial result.

SAHACHAR,
Jan. 21st, 1891.

8. The *Sahachar*, of the 21st January, has the following on the Police Commission:—

So far as the writer understands the signs of the times, it is the desire of the authorities to appoint Europeans in large numbers to the Subordinate Executive Service. But it will be a mistake to give practical effect to this desire. When the Duke of Argyll was Secretary of State for India, it was settled once

for all to reserve the Uncovenanted Service for the natives of the country, and the writer does not think that the Government of India will wilfully depart from this rule. But as the Head of that Government is often surrounded by men who, from selfish motives, withhold real facts from him, it is necessary to state, for His Excellency's information, that the Eurasians and the Europeans who are born and bred in this country are a worthless lot. According to the *Indian Daily News* newspaper they are fit only for clerkships, and the English system of administration of justice in this country will lose its present high character if these men are entrusted with magisterial duties and the power of summary trial. All things considered, Native Deputy Magistrates are immeasurably superior to them. The statement made by some before the Commission, that the Natives of India prefer European *hakims*, is absolutely without foundation. If Government wants to improve the present system of police administration, it should dismiss the District Superintendents and Assistant District Superintendents of Police, who are as a body worthless, and entrust Deputy Magistrates with their work; for they alone are fit for police service who know the country. Mr. Madge has admitted this in the case of constables, and what is right in the case of constables must certainly be more so in the case of the superior officers of the police.

9. Referring to Rai Kunja Lal Banerji's statement before the Police Commission, that the appointment of a larger number of chowkidars for each village will necessitate increase of taxation which will be a great hardship to villagers, the *Banganivási*, of the 23rd January, says that anyone conversant with village affairs knows what a strain the villagers find it on their means to pay in cash even the present small quarterly instalment of the chowkidari tax. The system of giving chowkidars *chákrán* lands had its origin in the desire not to inflict this hardship on the people. Under that system the chowkidars used to look upon every villager as his master, and was never remiss in the performance of his duties. But under the present system of paying chowkidars in cash, and appointing them in villages other than their own, they have ceased to regard the villagers with the respect which they showed them under the old system. They now appear to consider it their duty to guard only the houses of the few well known men in the villages, without taking any care of the life and property of the rest. The village police has ceased to do its duty in the old way almost simultaneously with the introduction of the system of paying them regularly every month in cash. It is seldom now that a chowkidar is heard to give his warning cries to the sleeping villagers at night. The reason of this remissness in the performance of their duties by the chowkidars is to be found in the diminution of the sense of respect and submission which the chowkidars formerly entertained towards the villagers, and also in the panchayet system. The writer would therefore once more see the *chákrán* system introduced for the payment of chowkidars, although it is idle to hope that Government will take up this suggestion, seeing that it is about to abolish it even in the few places where it still exists.

Police oppression at Bankura.

10. A correspondent of the *Samaya*, of the 23rd January, has the following on the subject of the alleged police oppression at Bankura:—

Though the Magistrate of Bankura is fully to blame for his oppressive conduct in connection with the disturbance in that place, the conduct of the District Superintendent of Police of the same place has become even more oppressive and reprehensible. After having oppressed the people of Bankura for 9 or 10 days, the Magistrate has left for the mofussil, and the District Superintendent's turn to commit oppression has come. One day he took it into his head to summon all the residents of the town, requiring them to be present at the *kothi* of the *padris* at 8 A.M. Everybody obeyed the order, and even shop-keepers closed their shops in order to be present at the *kothi*. They waited there for three or four hours, and then they were told to come again at 4 P.M. They came again at 4 P.M., and were again dismissed after three or four hours. But no sooner had they gone than the Sub-Inspector of Police was asked to issue warrants against them. One day a Christian said, a man belonging to our coolie depôt saw a certain person beat the *Sahebs*. Directly the person was arrested and confined in the police lock-up for the whole day, and at last set free on bail. Again, though the power

BANGANIVASI,
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

SAMAYA,
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

of appointing special constables is by the law vested in the Magistrate, the District Superintendent of Police is appointing special constables on his own authority, as is shown by the sunnud of appointment which contains only his own signature. The police has issued a notice offering a reward of Rs. 100 to the person who will be able to trace the men who set fire to the Mission school building; but it is doing nothing to discover the person or persons who set fire to the Bengali school house. The gentlemen who were appointed special constables brought down a barrister from Calcutta to plead their case, and were then set free from their duty. But the police has now appointed about 200 ghatwals as special constables to guard the houses of the Christians, though the latter say that their houses do not require such guarding. It seems that the police here exist only for the *Sahebs* and not for the Hindus. The Lieutenant Governor is asked to take notice of these acts of oppression, and to devise means without delay for the protection of the people.

BANGAVASI
Jan. 24th, 1891.

11. The *Bangavási*, of the 24th January, has learnt that theft has become very rife in Hijla in the Burrisal district. Recently valuables worth about four hundred rupees were stolen from the house of a gentleman.

12. The same paper has learnt that thefts have become very rife in Darisaripur and the neighbouring villages in the Pubna district. Lately seven or eight instances of theft occurred, and the people are living in constant dread of the thieves. The authorities should look sharp.

BANGAVASI.

Thefts in a village in the Burrisal district.

Thefts in some villages in the Pubna district.

(b)—*Working of the courts.*

SAKTI
Jan. 20th, 1891.

13. The *Sakti*, of the 20th January, says that Mr. Beighton's practice of holding his court with closed doors causes great inconvenience to the parties. It is only by bribing the chaprassis that entrance into the court room can be obtained by parties who have business with the pleaders or muktars engaged in a case which is being heard. It is hoped Mr. Beighton will earn the thanks of the public by discontinuing this practice.

Mr. Beighton, Judge of Dacca.

BENGAL EXCHANGE
GAZETTE,
Jan. 21st, 1891.

14. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 21st January, says that the revenue derived from the administration of civil justice leaves to the Government a balance of between 35 and 36 lakhs of rupees after meeting not only all expenditure for the administration of that justice, but the whole expenditure for the maintenance of the police and the administration of criminal justice also. This shows that justice is sold in India. No Government in the world has ever been able to make a profit by this means, and the English Government in India can do it only because the people most loyally acquiesce in everything that the authorities do.

The Indians were not so litigious before the advent of the English as they have now become; nor was the country so thickly studded with courts as it is now. The more the rulers are exerting themselves to frame new laws and establish additional courts of justice, the more the masses are being convinced of the solicitude of the rulers for the security of their lives and property. But they do not see that they are seriously mistaken in gauging the intentions of Government in this way. Whatever the English do in this country, they do for the sake of money. Has anybody ever seen them take up any undertaking in a perfectly disinterested spirit? Take, for instance, the Age of Consent Bill. The proposed legislation is nothing but an attempt to create a fresh source of income by opening up the way for a new class of suits; for the foolish Indians will be only too ready to take advantage of the new law to gratify their malice against their personal enemies. Is it not extortion of the worst kind to set a fee on any and every business transacted in or through a court of justice, to make stringent and extortionate rules like those which now exist for taking copies of court papers? One would be expelled the country if one were to narrate all the innumerable ways in which Government extorts money from the people. And for such a Government to call the zemindars extortionate reminds one of the story of Alexander and the robber. The people do not for a moment see that the Government is absolutely ruining them.

15. The *Grāmvasī*, of the 26th January, says that the Deputy Magistrate of Uluberia is daily becoming more and more unpopular. The following charges have been made against him:—

GRAMVASI,
Jan. 26th, 1891.

Charges against the Deputy Magistrate of Uluberia.

1. On the occasion of throwing the image of the goddess Jagaddhatri into the river, it is customary with the people to sing and dance on the boats containing the images. This year the people were singing and dancing on the boats as usual, when the Deputy Magistrate, who was then making a pleasure trip on the river, had the boats brought to the bank and made over the people to the police. They were afterwards fined eight annas each.

2. On the 5th of November last a man named Suter Mullik was present in the Court of the Deputy Magistrate during the hearing of a case. He was bitten on the back by a mosquito, and he therefore slapped his back. This enraged the Deputy Magistrate so much that he at once ordered the man to be sent to hajut, and the man had to remain in hajut for three hours.

3. He also frequently puts off the dates fixed for the trying of cases in his court to suit his own convenience, and thus harasses suitors.

16. A correspondent of the *Som Prakāsh*, of the 26th January, complains of the irregular attendance of the Santipur Honorary Bench, and says that the attention of the authorities was repeatedly drawn to the matter, but in vain.

SOM PRAKASH,
Jan. 26th, 1891.

The Santipur Honorary Bench.

(d)—Education.

17. A correspondent of the *Som Prakāsh*, of the 19th January, has learnt from the notice issued by the Director of Public Instruction that none of the essays sent in for the Braj Mohan Dutt prize for 1889-90 having been considered good by the examiners, the prize for that year has not been awarded, and that in consequence two prizes of Rs. 40 each will be awarded in the current year. Now what does the expression "having been considered good" mean? Do the examiners expect that the essays written by women of this country in the present state of their culture would be perfect both in matter and form? Are the women of the present day expected to be so many Vidyasagars? The authorities should therefore explain what in their opinion constitutes the standard excellence of the essays? What, again, is the meaning of the concluding portion of the notice, where it is stated that no prize will be awarded when the examiners consider even the best essay to be unfit for it? Perhaps it means that when any doubt will arise as to whether an essay is written by a woman or not, no prize will be awarded. If this be the meaning, then injustice is sure to be done in a great many cases where the essays will be genuine female compositions. The public will be glad if the Director of Public Instruction will kindly explain in clear language what kind of essays will be considered fit for the prize.

SOM PRAKASH,
Jan. 19th, 1891.

The Braj Mohan Dutt Prize.

18. The *Sanjivani*, of the 24th January, regrets having published a paragraph against the Syndicate of the Calcutta University in its issue of the 17th January last (see R. N. P. for the 24th January 1891, paragraph 19).

SANJIVANI,
Jan. 24th, 1891.

An order of the Syndicate of the Calcutta University.

19). The Syndicate issued no such order as was criticised in that paragraph.

19. The same paper says that it has nothing to say against the new Fellows of the Calcutta University. But there are among them men who do not belong to the Education Department. The conduct of the Senate in not sending up for appointment as Fellows the names of such members of the Education Department as have acquired a reputation by their services is unpardonable.

SANJIVANI

The late University election.

20. The *Dainik-o-Samāchār Chandrikā*, of the 29th January, approves of the statement made by the Vice-Chancellor, in the course of his convocation speech, that he was in favour of the introduction of Bengali in the curriculum of the higher examinations of the Calcutta University.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHA
CHANDRIKA,
Jan. 29th, 1891.

Bengali in the Calcutta University.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

21. A correspondent of the *Chāruvārtā*, of the 19th January, says that the whole work done by the Netrokona Municipality during the three years that it has been

CHARUVARTTA,
Jan. 19th, 1891.

The Netrokona Municipality.

levying taxes is the construction of two or three unmetalled roads. The roads in this municipality are not lighted, though the roads in all the mofussil municipalities in this district are provided with lights. The Netrokona municipality has also done nothing in the matter of sanitation.

Why have the municipal authorities exempted the office buildings from the operation of the rule requiring all huts to be made of tin? If these buildings are accidentally burnt, the loss will be immense.

(g)—*Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

HITAKARI,
Jan. 12th, 1891.

22. The *Hitakari*, of the 12th January, says that the two additional passenger trains which are now being run on the Eastern Bengal State Railway will fail to be useful unless the one which is started from Calcutta is timed to reach Kushtea just in the evening, and that which is started from Goalundo is timed to arrive at that station early in the morning.

(h)—*General.*

SOM PRAKASH
Jan. 16th, 1891.

23. The *Som Prakash*, of the 26th January, has learnt that Mr. Sandel, Controller of Postal Accounts, Calcutta, will take 80 new hands for his office. It is said that the appointment of these new hands has become necessary in consequence of the strange system of doing work which has been devised by Mr. Sandel, and under which the existing staff of the office find it unable to get through their work. Government ought to enquire into the matter. Surely so much additional expenditure as the new appointments must involve should not be permitted in these days of financial difficulty.

III.—LEGISLATIVE.

HITAKARI,
Jan. 12th, 1891.

24. The *Hitakari*, of the 12th January, says that opposition to the raising of the age of consent means nothing but the abetment of brutal oppression on girls married at an early age and the encouragement of child-marriage. The present degradation of the Indian community is alike pitiable and shameful. It is no matter for wonder that Government should meet with opposition in attempting to raise the age of consent in a country where it incurred the displeasure of the people in abolishing a hateful custom like *suttee*.

BENGAL EXCHANGE
GAZETTE,
Jan. 16th, 1891.

25. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 16th January, requests the legislature to consider whether it ought not to satisfy all parties that the attainment of puberty by a girl means consent to her husband's cohabitation with her.

SAKTI,
Jan. 20th, 1891.

26. The *Sakti*, of the 20th January, has the following:—

As the Government is resolved to raise the age of consent, it is proper to consider whether some step cannot be devised for effecting its purpose without interfering with the religious customs of the Hindus and without subjecting the people to any new form of oppression.

There can be little doubt that the passing of the proposed law will interfere with the performance of the *garbhadhan* ceremony in certain cases. The argument that the ceremony is not observed by the educated people possesses no weight, because people who do not perform this ceremony bear an infinitesimal proportion to those that do perform it. Again, whatever safeguards the legislature may provide against the committing of oppression under the new law, it is certain that private malice will find in it a ready means of gratifying itself. And the only thing that a malicious person, desiring to do mischief to another, will have to do will be to lodge a false information with the Magistrate to the effect that the daughter, the wife or the daughter-in-law of such-and-such a person has become *enciente* before the age of twelve. And then without waiting to see what the result of the case may be, it is clear that the mere preliminary steps in the case, namely, the indictment of the relatives of the girl before a court of justice and the medical examination of the girl's own person, will be sufficient disgrace for her family to drive its male members even to commit

suicide. And then it is horrible to think of the consequences that will follow if the relatives of the girl oppose her medical examination. However much the Government may assure people of the complete innocuousness of the measure, there is little doubt that it will be a powerful weapon for the gratification of private malice, and that it will also open up a new way of corruption to the police.

But if Government is resolved to carry its point, it should, instead of fixing any age limit, make the age of consent synchronous with the performance of the *garbhadhan* ceremony, for everybody, whether Hindu or not, is strongly opposed to cohabitation before the attainment of puberty. The amendment of the existing law on these lines will protect all wives from premature consummation of marriage. The law, as proposed, will not protect from premature consummation girls who attain their puberty at a rather advanced age, say, thirteen or fourteen; but the amendment suggested will give effectual protection even to these girls. No objection will be taken to such amendment on the ground of police oppression or of its abuse in the hands of wicked men, as information of the performance or otherwise of the *garbhadhan* ceremony will be far more easily procurable than evidence of age.

The Government and the public should also direct their attention to a more careful and regular registration of births with a view to making the age of female children more easily ascertainable.

Before making any change in the law, the legislature should consult the opinions of learned pundits and of the Hindu Judges of the Calcutta and Madras High Courts.

27. The *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 20th January, thus continues its remarks on the Age of Consent Bill:—

The Age of Consent Bill.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
Jan. 20th, 1891.

The object of the Bill is to prevent immature prostitution and premature cohabitation. So far as immature prostitution is concerned, the writer has nothing to object to the Bill, nay, he is for raising the age of consent even to 15 for that purpose. The Law Member's statement that the proposed alteration of the Penal Code will in no way affect the present marriage system of the Hindus is not correct. The Hindus do not hanker after premature cohabitation, but they consider it their religious duty to marry their daughters before puberty. And as no Hindu father will, after the passing of the proposed Bill, consider it safe to marry his son with a girl under 12 years of age, the marriage of girls before 12 will become difficult. And will not that mean an indirect interference with the Hindu marriage custom, and consequently with the Hindu religion? Again, under the proposed law, when a certain event takes place before 12 in the case of a married girl, she will have to desist from cohabiting with her husband, and so the Hindus will be compelled to act contrary to their religious belief, which requires them to cohabit with their wives on the first occurrence of the menses.

There is no necessity for the proposed law. Its object is to protect girls from physical injury caused by premature cohabitation. But as a large number of girls in this country attain puberty at 13, 14 or 15 years of age, the proposed law will absolutely fail to attain its object in a large number of cases. Sir Steuart Bayley says that the practice of premature cohabitation is general in this country. But if that had been the case, thousands of cases like that of Phulmani would have annually occurred in the country. And the very fact that such cases have been so few in number should show that no special law of the kind proposed will prevent such cases, because such cases will always be few and remain undiscovered. This being the case, the proposed law is likely to remain a dead letter. Anyhow, before passing a law of this kind, which is likely to bring much trouble to Hindu families, Government should have ascertained by careful enquiry whether or not the practice referred to by Sir Steuart Bayley is general. The present attempt to save girls from imaginary oppression by their husbands will only deeply wound the religious sensibilities of the Hindus.

The Age of Consent Bill.

28. The *Sahachar*, of the 21st January, thus continues its remarks on the Age of Consent Bill:—

SAHACHAR,
Jan. 21st, 1891.

It is impossible for Government to act so as to satisfy all parties. A foreign Government like that of this country cannot give an authoritative interpretation of the *Sastras*. If a Vikramaditya or an Akbar had now been

ruler of India, a meeting of all the pundits in India would have been called and a decision would have been arrived at on the present question. But this cannot be expected from the present Government. The present Government is always willing to act in accordance with the *Sastras*, so far as it is practicable to do so. But when the *Sastras* stand in the way of improvement, it disregards them. It will therefore disregard them in the present case. The Bill will be passed and people will probably in course of time get accustomed to it, and it is quite possible that future generations will feel grateful to Government for it. At the present moment, however, the Bill has caused a great commotion in the country, and considering the condition of the police and the way in which Magistrates sometimes conduct themselves, and that it is intended to appoint Eurasians and half-educated Europeans as Deputy Magistrates, it must be admitted that there is sufficient cause for anxiety. Government can allay all this anxiety by introducing the following proviso in the Bill—namely, that Magistrates should not take any case under the proposed law unless the complaint is preferred by some particular individual, and that these cases should be tried by the jury in the Sessions Court. There is also this hope, that the people of the present day are very different from what they were before, and can very well defend themselves. Besides, this much is certain, that notwithstanding the existence of race-quarrels in the country, no Indian, be he a Hindu, a Mussulman, or a Native Christian, will bring false cases under the law. The widows of this country generally lead pure lives, still occasional cases of foeticide are heard of. But how many of these cases come before the courts? All this shows that there is not much cause for anxiety.

BEHAR BANDHU,
Jan. 22nd, 1891.

29. The *Behar Bandhu*, of the 22nd January, sees nothing but foul play and police oppression as the inevitable result of the passing of the Age of Consent Bill.

BANGHIAVASI,
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

30. The *Banganivási*, of the 23rd January, says that on the strength of certain statements made by Pundit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani, it was stated by the Law Member that

“the teachings of the sacred books of the Hindus are not in conflict with the proposals of the (Age of Consent) Bill.” But after the explanation since given by the pundit of those statements, it is clear that the Law Member’s contention that the provisions of the proposed law will not clash with the teachings of the Hindu religion cannot be made to rest on the pundit’s authority. One is therefore forced to the conclusion that Government is going to amend the existing law either under a misconception, or, deliberately, for the purpose of doing violence to the Hindu religion. And if the latter be the correct conclusion, it is idle to think of dissuading the Government from the course it is about to take.

And if the statement that you are going to make this law because it will do no violence to the Hindu’s religious and social observances has been made by you because you do not know and do not understand the matter, then will you, when you see your mistake, desist from the oppression you are about to commit? We will take no vague reply if your true intention is not stated, and what is told is something very different from what is: we will have none of it. The simple question that we should candidly and in plain words like to ask is, whether you are prepared to pass the proposed law even if you come to know that it will really do violence to the Hindu religion. You may ask, is there any means of ascertaining whether or no violence will be done to the Hindu religion? We answer, yes there is. Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter clearly pointed out to the Council that the proposed law would throw obstacles in the way of the observance of a particular injunction of the *Sastras*. The Hon’ble Mr. Nulkar objected to this, and said that “Hindu religious authorities on such matters are so varied and contradictory that it is often difficult to decide as to which of them ought to be accepted and followed in preference to others.” Now this observation is extremely absurd and unworthy of a learned scholar. The Hindu *Sastras* must necessarily be varied, and to anglicised people like yourselves they must appear intricate. The Hindu *Sastras* have been in force from a time of which there is no beginning, and different *Sastras* have been composed and compiled in Hindu society in different *Yugas* and ages. Just think how many laws you have yourselves passed, amended and repealed during the period of your rule in India—a period extending over only a little more than a century. You call the Hindu *Sastras* intricate, but are your

own laws really so very simple? It is precisely because your laws are so numerous and intricate that one who is not a professional lawyer is never able to understand them, and a person not trained as a lawyer is sure to be lost in their mazes. But does no one solve your knotty legal questions? Yes, they are solved by the professional lawyer who has made your laws the study and business of his life.

And, similarly, as regards the Hindu *Sastras*, which regulate the religious affairs of the Hindus, it is only the pundits who study and teach those *Sastras* and make them their profession in life that are competent to pronounce an opinion on any knotty question connected therewith. Like your Advocate-General, Legal Remembrancer, and Standing Counsel, the Hindus too have their Vidyaratnas, Churamanis, and Siromanis, whose opinions alone are received by them as authoritative. If you desire to have correct information in this matter, if you really want to ascertain whether or no the proposed law will do violence to the Hindu's religious and social observances, refer to these pundits, and the difficulty will be settled. No one would consult Sir Alfred Croft or Mr. Tawney, scholars though they be, on a question of your law, in preference to Sir Charles Paul or Mr. Woodroffe. Similarly, on a question connected with the Hindu religion no one would consult an able Doctor like Mohendra Lal Sarkar or an able Editor like Narendra Nath Sen. We fully concur in the observations made on this subject in the Legislative Council by Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter. And we do so not because the man who made those observations is a Romesh Chunder, a Knight, and an ex-Judge of the High Court; we do so because we know that the opinion he has expressed regarding the Hindu rite of *garbhadhan* is in conformity with the Hindu *Sastras*, with the views of Hindu professors and scholars, and with immemorial Hindu practice.

The Hindu alone knows what his religion is and the Hindu alone practices that religion. And if, without making any enquiry of the Hindus, without hearing what they say and without taking their opinions and in disregard of their views, and trampling upon the *Sastras*, and passing by the Hindu Rajas, Maharajas, and pundits, and placing reliance on the statements of non-Hindus, Christians, Brahmos, Mussulmans and anglicised Parsees, and acting under the counsel of enemies, you pass the proposed law, we shall know that all our hopes and expectations are gone, and that we must be prepared to give up once for all even the hope that it would be given to us under British rule to pass our miserable lives in the practice of religious meditation and observances. We shall then understand that, though you profess religious neutrality, still it is for the purpose, secretly cherished by you, of destroying the religion of your subjects that you have assumed the government of this unfortunate country. Would to God, this apprehension of ours may prove false, the well-meaning British Government may not by force of law rend and tear Hindu society much in the same way as the wicked Mussulman ruined it at the point of the sword, and ignoring a thousand ways which remain open for doing good to the Indians, it may not, under the plea of doing good, ruin the Hindus by destroying the honour of Hindu women, bringing disgrace upon Hindu homes, and smoothing the road for the entrance of demons into the sacred Hindu zenana.

31. The same paper says that Government has committed a great mistake by ignoring the opinion of Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter on the Age of Consent Bill, on the authority of the adverse opinion given by Mr. Nulkar of Bombay. Government should know that the customs of the Hindu society of Bengal are very different from those of the Hindu society of Bombay, and that though Mr. Nulkar's opinion may be acceptable to the Hindus of Bombay, it is not so to the Hindu community of Bengal. The age of consent ought not to be raised simply on the strength of the opinion expressed by Mr. Nulkar.

32. The *Samvad Prabhakar*, of the 23rd January, says that Sir Alfred Croft is said to have prohibited the Professors of the Sanskrit College to attend any meetings held to protest against the Age of Consent Bill even as spectators. What can be more arbitrary than this? It would be no wonder if Sir Alfred were next to prohibit them to perform their respective religious observances. Does he expect by this means to prevent the pundits from expressing their independent opinions? If he does this, he must be greatly mistaken.

BANGANIVASI,
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

SAMVAD PRABHAKAR,
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

Sir Alfred Croft and the Age of
Consent Bill.

These pundits are the teachers and custodians of the Hindu religion, and generally act as Hindu priests. It will be no wonder if after this they are required some day to give up their priestly office. If they are really required to do so, they, as well as those who employ them as such, will become losers. Are Government servants, then, so many slaves who, for fear of incurring their master's displeasure, must act even against the injunctions of their religion? It behoves Sir Alfred Croft to reconsider his order. Government should also know that if the order were made general in its application, it would earn a bad name, and the people would lose all confidence in it.

SUDHAKAR,
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

33. The *Sudhakar*, of the 23rd January, has the following on the Age of Consent Bill:—We gave our opinion before in favour of a law that would raise the age of consent.

But we do not approve of a law for raising the age of consent in the case of the wife. There are many reasons why we do not like such a law. In the first place, we do not think it right for Government to interfere in a matter of this kind. When the prevalence of early marriage is diminished by the force of public opinion, early cohabitation will cease of itself. This is, in fact, one of those matters that are best regulated by public opinion, and it is by no means expedient to remedy the evil of premature cohabitation by a harsh exercise of Governmental authority. It is said that the Hindu religion enjoins the marriage of girls before the commencement of the menses, and makes non-cohabitation on the first occurrence of the menses a grave sin. Under these circumstances, it would certainly be wrong to prevent the marriage of girls of twelve or under or to deprive them of the privilege of cohabitation. To do so would be a serious interference with social and religious rules. If this is done, the Queen's Proclamation will lose all its value. If such legislation be really repugnant to the Hindu religion, there can be no doubt that Government will startle, alarm and fill with uneasiness a principal Indian community by its interference in this matter. We have no knowledge of the Hindu religion, and it would therefore be impertinence in us to say anything more on this point.

Amongst the Mussulmans, it is not a sin not to marry a girl before the commencement of her menses, nor is it a sin not to cohabit with her immediately after her first menses. The religious books of the Mussulmans discountenance early marriage. But there can be no doubt that any raising of the age of consent by legislation will lead indirectly to the fixing of an age for marriage. Under the existing law, cohabitation with a girl of 10 is illegal, and there is nothing to object to this. But when marriage and cohabitation at 11 or 12 are established practices in this country, their prevention by legislation will be a very serious matter. We know that a few girls of tender years are permanently injured and even lose their lives in consequence of forcible cohabitation. But it is to be greatly doubted whether such cases are even one in a lakh. On the other hand, in the absence of widow-marriage, thousands of cases of abortion and hundreds of cases of infanticide are taking place every year, and numerous women are losing their lives. But who is there to prevent all this? When Government is not willing to interfere with anybody's religion or social customs, is it right for it to bring discredit on its liberal administration of the country by interfering with the age of consent? If Government interferes with religion and social customs, its reputation for liberality will be gone, and the Proclamation of the honoured Empress of India will lose all its value. Government professes, on the one hand, not to interfere with early marriage, but, on the other, it is striking at the very root of early marriage. In fact, abolishing early cohabitation without abolishing early marriage is a ridiculous thing indeed. Government says, let there be early marriage, but there must be no early cohabitation. But this will indirectly prevent early marriage. Government seems to be adopting a crooked instead of a straightforward policy in this matter.

Although the cases under the proposed law will not be made warrant cases, the public will still have to live in a state of uneasiness, and will have sometimes to suffer even indignities. If anybody has a quarrel with another, he will probably institute a false case against the latter or against his son or daughter. And whatever the decision of the court may be, there can be no doubt the unfortunate man or his son, daughter, sister or son-in-law will suffer great harassment. If he be a respectable man, his honour and reputation will be gone, and many families with stainless names will be steeped in shame and

disgrace. Such cases will demand the examination of the girls by medical men, and that is how respectable families will be stained. And will not that be dreadful oppression?

There will be little chance of offenders being punished under the proposed law. Many girls of 9 and 10 are now cohabiting with their husbands. Many girls of tender years are now ruined by rich men. Has the law been able to put a stop to the dreadful oppression which is thus committed by rich men? There will be as much premature cohabitation after the passing of the proposed law as there is now. And the only result of the proposed legislation will be that a grave suspicion will be aroused in men's minds against the Government, and people will be profoundly alarmed and facilities will be afforded to wicked men to achieve wicked ends.

Government says that it will not interfere with the religion or social customs of any community. But it is nevertheless going to interfere, indirectly if not directly, with the social customs of a particular community. We cannot understand how Government will ascertain who cohabits after marriage and who does not. Will Government create a separate class of detective police officers for this purpose? And will those detectives keep constant watch at the corner of every house? We can make out nothing on this head.

Again, India is a hot country, and girls here generally attain puberty at an earlier age than in Europe. Girls who are married here at 9 or 10 are therefore sure to be impatient for their husband's company, and their husbands too will be equally impatient. Thus both husbands and wives will certainly suffer mental anguish, and it will be no wonder if they have recourse to illegal means for the gratification of their uncontrollable desire. It will be a dreadful thing to allow people to marry and not to allow them to cohabit. We consider a law for the prevention of early cohabitation to be even more mischievous than a law for the prevention of early marriage.

Early marriage and early cohabitation are established practices in Hindu society. Those practices prevail very widely also among the cultivating and other low class Mussulmans. We are not in favour of early marriage or early cohabitation. But we are thoroughly opposed to their prevention by means of legislation. Early marriage is not at all prevalent among respectable Mussulmans. Respectable Mussulmans marry their daughters and sisters at 14, 15, 16 or even 18 or 20. This does not interfere with our religion, nor does it do any harm to our society. Again, education now enables everybody to realise the mischievous character of early marriage. Early marriage is not at all prevalent among educated people. But early marriage is very prevalent among the class to which three-fourths of the population of this country belong. Low class Mussulmans in Behar and the North-Western Provinces are more in favour of early marriage than low class Mussulmans in Bengal.

We cannot say whether or no a law raising the age of consent will interfere with our holy Islam religion. It is only the moulavis who are acquainted with our religious books and can say this, and it is only they that can freely express their opinion on the subject.

34. The *Samaya*, of the 23rd January, thus continues its remarks on the Age of Consent Bill:—

The Age of Consent Bill.

The agitation on the Bill proves the truth of the statement that Bengalis are fond of fuss and empty noise. The agitation is simply uncalled for, and the writer would have been the first to agitate if the the proposed Bill had in any way interfered with the religion or religious customs of the Hindus. The proposed law will do nothing but good to the Hindu community.

Four objections have been urged against the Bill, namely, (1) that the law will compel Hindus to disregard the rules enjoined in their Sastras, (2) that the present interference with the social customs of the Hindus will lead to similar interference in future, (3) that social reforms like the one proposed should come from within and not from without, and (4) that the law will increase police oppression. To reply to these objections in their order—

1. The Hindu religion is based on the Vedas, but *garbhadhan* is mentioned neither in the Vedas nor in any other ancient Hindu Sastra. It is true, Manu mentions *garbhadhan*, but he nowhere says when it is to be performed. In one place the law-giver says that a girl of 12 should be married to a man of 30,

SAMAYA,
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

but what will become of this *Vyavastha* if a girl is considered *rajasvala* (in her menses, real or potential) at 10 according to Parasara? It is clear from this that according to Manu the performance of *garbhadhan* was not indispensable on the first occurrence of a certain event. Manu was perhaps in favour of the performance of the ceremony at a time when both the husband and the wife became fit for the sexual act. Even if Raghunandan's view be accepted as authoritative, it cannot be said that there can be no *garbhadhan* without cohabitation. For it is enjoined in the Sastras that the *garbha* of a girl in her menses may be purified by simply eating *panchamrita* (milk, curds, sugar, honey and ghee). If the Sastras had regarded the non-performance of *prayaschitta* as a grave sin, they would certainly have prescribed punishment or *prayaschitta* for it.

Again, the proposed law is intended for all India and not for any particular province. This being the case, Government cannot enact one law for a handful of its subjects and another law for the rest.

Some ask Government to introduce a saving clause in the Bill giving husbands the right of cohabiting with their wives whenever these begin to menstruate. The writer does not disapprove of this proposal, but thinks that its adoption will give the police facilities for committing oppression. For the police will bring false cases under the law and thus necessitate the medical examination of girls.

The other day the writer asked a learned pundit about the *garbhadhan*, and he replied that the object of the ceremony was to prevent pre-menstrual cohabitation. But like the institution of Kulinism, the ceremony now does more harm than good, pre-menstrual cohabitation being now general in the country. The object of the ceremony has thus been defeated and the ceremony itself is all but neglected.

The apprehension entertained by many that the proposed law will increase police oppression does not seem to be well founded. But even if it is allowed that police oppression will increase after the passing of the Bill, the proper course to take will be not to object to the Bill on the ground of police oppression, but to ask Government to take steps with a view of preventing oppression.

The same paper thus replies to a correspondent's letter on the Age of Consent Bill:—The correspondent thinks that whenever a girl commences to menstruate, she should be thought fit to give her consent irrespective of her age. And as the occurrence of a certain event in the case of a girl is known to her neighbours, their evidence should be considered sufficient to establish the fact that the event has taken place, and there will be no necessity for the medical examination of girls. But how shall the necessary evidence be obtained in the case of the families in which *Garbhadhan* is not observed, or is observed quietly? Again in many cases, the flow of blood caused by hurt is confounded with menstruation, and how can the evidence of neighbours be accepted as trustworthy in such cases? Thus, while the age of a girl can be easily ascertained by a reference to her horoscope, the fact of the occurrence of a certain event in her case cannot be established without medical evidence. This being the case, the provision in the Bill fixing the age of consent at 12 is to be preferred to the proposal of the correspondent giving girls the right of giving their consent on the first occurrence of a certain event.

URDU GUIDE AND
DARUSSALTANAT,
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

EDUCATION GAZETTE,
Jan. 23rd, 1891.

35. The *Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat*, of the 23rd January, approves of the Age of Consent Bill, and expects that much good will result from its passing.

36. The *Education Gazette*, of the 23rd January, thus continues its remarks on the Age of Consent Bill:—

It is hardly possible that the Sastras, under the guidance of which the Hindus have become the most gentle and religious people on the face of the earth, and the observance of which has enabled Hindu society to live on through thousands of years in spite of the difficulties and dangers which often surrounded it, should contain conflicting views, should be unsuited to the requirements of Hindu society, or should contain injunctions opposed to the teachings of science. The more reverently one discusses the Sastras, the more convinced one becomes of the harmony that pervades them, of their liberal spirit, and of their complete adaptability to the requirements of Hindu society. The principal object which the Sastras have in view is to give man's

sensuous inclinations a religious turn and purpose. The Sastras say that whatever a man does should be done with a religious object. The senses acting uncontrolled are Asur-like functions, but controlled and guided by the Sastras, they are God-like functions. It is for this reason that the sanction of the Sastras was considered necessary to the performance of all acts. He who does not keep this view of the Sastras in mind will never be able to correctly interpret the Sastras bearing upon the question of the consummation of marriage. Manu says in one place—*Ritukálavigami syát svadárániratah sudá Parvavarjam barojet chainám tadvrata rati kámyayá*; that is, a man should cohabit with his married wife when she is in her menses, except on parva days, should not cohabit with another's wife, and should cohabit with his wife, even when she is not in her menses, if she wishes him to do so. In this passage the expressions *svadárániratah* (devoted to his own wife) and *tadvrata* (ever consulting her wish) are intended to put a restraint on the wilful misuse of the sexual act. There is so far a consensus of opinion regarding the meaning of the passage; but there is a difference of opinion among the commentators about the meaning of the expression *ritu kalavigami syat* (should cohabit with his wife when she is in her menses). According to Medhatithi, the Mahratta commentator on Manu, the injunction is a *parisankhya*, and means that if a man wishes to cohabit with his wife he should do so when she is in her menses, and not at any other time. The writer of the *Mitakshara* is also of this opinion. But Kulluka Bhatta, who is followed by Raghunandan Siromoni, regards the injunction as a *niyama*, and takes it to mean that "one must cohabit with one's wife when she is in her menses."

Another text quoted by Raghunandan means this:—A man should cohabit with his wife when she is in her menses until he begets a son. For according to Sruti (the Vedas) the begetting of a son is indispensable for repaying the debt (due to the Pitris or ancestors). Thus it is clear that the *vidhi* enjoined by Manu in the passage quoted above ceases to be operative on the birth of a son. Again, according to a *sloka* quoted by Smartta Bhattacharyya (Raghunandan), the menses in which conception can take place are menses recurring every month, ceasing on the fifth day, red in colour like the Java flower, devoid of odour and painless. If conception, then, be the only object of sexual intercourse, and if conception can take place only on the occurrence of the kind of menses described above, *Garbhadhan*, it should be clear, need not be performed on the first occurrence of the menses, and a man need not cohabit with his wife every time she menstruates. Besides, it is nowhere stated in the Sastras that *Garbhadhan* must be performed on the first occurrence of the menses.

The writer is nevertheless not in favour of the proposed measure. The Bill ought not to be passed, for its passing will increase the domestic difficulties of the Hindus, will give a stimulus to that spirit of mutual animosity which is eating into the vitals of Hindu society, will make people even more timid and lifeless than they are already by increasing official oppression in the country, and will undermine the very foundations of Hindu society. The danger which now threatens Hindu society is the creation of the band of thoughtless native reformers who are so fond of imitating foreign manners and customs. But whether Government passes the Bill or not, it is the duty of the people to act according to the Sastras, for compliance with the Sastras will enable them to enjoy all the benefit and avoid all the mischief which the proposed law may be expected to produce.

The writer agrees with Babu Nabin Chunder Sen, Deputy Magistrate, that the custom of *dviragaman* should be revived. Dr. Chandra thinks that a girl does not become fit for cohabitation on the first occurrence of her menses. This is also the view of the Sastras. According to Mr. Savage, Collector, it is very improper to characterise as rape the sexual intercourse of a husband with his wife, no matter at what age it is performed. Mr. Power, Commissioner, justly says that Hindu society must be in a moribund condition, or it would have introduced the proposed reform without aid from Government. And Mr. Savage is right. The evils that now afflict Hindu society have grown out of its weakness.

37. Referring to the graduates' meeting held at the Albert Hall on Wednesday, the 21st January, the *Sanjivani*, of the 24th January, says that a large number of graduates, as well as a number of people who never crossed

The graduates' meeting on the Age of Consent Bill.

SANJIVANI,
Jan. 24th, 1891.

the threshold of the University, were present at the meeting. Raja Sasi-sekhareswar Ray, though not even an undergraduate of the University, was present at the meeting, and proposed that Raja Peary Mohan should take the chair. In explaining the object of the meeting, Raja Peary Mohan said that they did not like the Bill, at which a number of people expressed signs of disapproval. This excited some others, who cried out "Expel the Brahmos," "Give the Brahmos a thrashing," and so on. There was now great disorder, and even some sensible Hindus lost their temper at this rude treatment of the Brahmos who had equal right with the Hindus to be present at the meeting. The disorder grew to such proportions that the Chairman had to stop his address. Baboo Bipin Chandra Pal then rose and asked the meeting to show due respect to the chair, and this had the effect of quieting the disturbance. But there was again great disorder on the same gentleman's rising once more to ask the meeting whether they had assembled to consider the Bill or protest against it. And the meeting had therefore to be dissolved by the Chairman.

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38. The same paper says that if the people of India do not of their own accord give up the practice of cohabiting with girls of ten or eleven years of age, Government will certainly force them to give it up. It is now clear that people will not of their own accord give up the practice. For it appears that they do not consider it a hateful practice, and are doing their best to perpetuate it. They trample the *Shastras* under their feet in other matters, but they take refuge therein when Government proposes to raise the age of consent. The British Parliament or the Government of India cannot therefore be blamed if they find it necessary to compel the people to give up the hateful practice. It is not desirable that a foreign Government should interfere in the social customs of its subjects, but when those subjects perversely stick to any evil practice, it is the duty of the Government to use compulsion in order to make them forswear it. It is not the fault of Government that it should be driven to the necessity of using such compulsion. The people of India boast that they are a civilised nation. Civilised, in sooth, when they do not hesitate to cohabit with girls hardly above ten years of age! It will be no wonder if the Europeans should consider them as occupying a lower grade in the scale of civilisation than even the barbarous people of Africa.

The protest against the Age of Consent Bill is based chiefly on certain rules laid down by a Hindu pundit named Raghunandan Bhattacharyya of Navadwip (Nuddea), who was born only three hundred years ago. Is it not shameful for the Hindus of to-day to hold in greater respect the teachings of a pundit of yesterday than the sacred texts of Manu or of the Vedas? The present agitation proves that the modern Hindus are a worthless people, for it means that they can support the most abominable practices on the authority of a common pundit of Nuddea. They forget that the *Shastras* are adapted only to the circumstances of the time when they are written, and have always been altered to suit altered conditions of society.

This paper has learnt from a reliable source that Government will pass the Bill in the face of every opposition. Would it not then be to the credit of the people to acquiesce in the passing of the Bill? The result of a forcible enactment of the proposed law will be that when the agitation will have subsided after the passing of the Bill, as it certainly will, the authorities will begin to believe that they can carry out any measure by force against the will of the people without meeting with any effectual opposition. Another evil effect of the present opposition to the Bill will be that people in England will form a very low opinion of the culture of the people of India, and will therefore consider them unworthy of political rights. What the people of India should therefore now do is to thank the Government for its good intentions, and to urge it to pass a law making it criminal to have carnal knowledge of the wife before she has attained her puberty.

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39. Referring to the Viceroy's statement that so far as he is aware the Age of Consent Bill will not violate any of the social or religious customs of the Hindus, and that he is confident that the enlightened portion of the Hindu community will support the Bill, the *Bangavási*, of the 24th January, asks if the Viceroy had, before making this statement, taken the opinions of the pundits who alone are entitled to explain the *Shastras* and to pass any opinion in this matter. If he

did not, how could His Excellency come to the conclusion that the Bill would not interfere with the Hindu religion? It appears from the *Gazette of India* of the 17th January that the Government consulted some officials on the subject of raising the age of consent. But among the published papers not the name of a single Hindu pundit is to be found, although there are many Hindu pundits in the service of Government. Will the Government kindly explain the reason of this omission in a matter vitally affecting the Hindu community?

The *Bangavási* consulted the opinions of the six Mahamahopadhyayas whose names were mentioned in its issue of the 17th January last, and they all say that the passing of the Bill will lead to an open interference with the Hindu religion. Thousands of other pundits besides those referred to above have been consulted, and they are all of the same opinion. If the Government postpones the passing of the Bill for only two months, this paper will show that all the pundits of the country, without a single exception, are opposed to the Bill.

Government should also consult the opinions of the respectable and well-known members of the Hindu community. The *Bangavási* has ascertained that the following among the Hindu nobility of Bengal and Behar are opposed to the Bill:—

The Maharaja of Nuddea, who is the leader of the Hindu community in his part of the country.

The Maharaja of Durbhunga.

The Maharaja of Dinagepore.

The Maharaja of Nattore in Rajshahye district.

Sir Maharaja Jotindra Mohan Tagore.

Kumar Sarat Chandra of Kandi in the Moorshedabad district.

Raja Rajendra Narayan of Sobha Bazar.

Maharaja Narendra Krishna.

Kumar Satyabadi of Bhukhailash.

Baboo Ramanath Ghosh of Pathuriaghata.

Raja Pearymohan of Utterpara.

Raja Sasisekhareswar of Tahirpur.

Raja Rajendralala Mitra.

Then as representatives of the educated community the undermentioned gentlemen ought to be consulted:—

Baboo Bireswar Chatterji, M.A.

Baboo Sarada Charan Mitra, M.A.

Baboo Chandra Nath Bose, M.A.

Dr Gurudas Bannerji, M.A.

Raja Peary Mohan Mukharji, M.A.

Rai Rajkumar Sarbadhikari Bahadur, M.A.

Baboo Ashutosh Mukharji, M.A.

These and a thousand other B.A's., B.L's., and M.A's., old and young, are opposed to the Bill. What, then, led the Government to suppose that the enlightened portion of the Hindu community would support the Bill? Those who led the Government into this error are enemies alike of the Government and of the Hindu community.

As for the official opinions published in the *Gazette of India*, Mr. Lewis, Commissioner of the Rajshahye Division, has not given any independent opinion of his own, and has stated only on the strength of opinions given by his subordinates, that consummation of marriage before puberty is very common in his division. Some other officials also have expressed a similar opinion. But none of them have given any reasons for their opinion. Little weight should therefore be attached to these opinions, which are of a gratuitous nature and which are not borne out by facts and figures. If Government wishes to ascertain whether or not premature consummation prevails widely in Bengal, it should appoint a commission for the purpose. And the appointment of such a commission is all the more necessary because Government appears to be making the proposed law without proper enquiry. Such a commission will bring out all facts connected with the matter, and the question can then be easily settled. It is strange that Government did not, before introducing the Bill, consider it necessary to appoint a commission in a matter of such grave importance, when it thought fit to appoint a commission in a matter of such small importance as the amendment of the factory law.

The medical opinion collected by Government is found to be of a very conflicting nature. One of the doctors consulted is of opinion that the attainment of puberty is the first sign of youth, and that means that a girl is fit for cohabitation after the first appearance of her menses. Another doctor is of opinion that girls become fit for cohabitation only one year after the commencement of the menses. A third says that a girl cannot conceive at the first flow of the menses. A fourth says that, in some cases, girls have been found capable of conceiving even before the first menstrual flow. Can any weight be attached to such conflicting testimony?

Then as regard the press, the leading vernacular papers are all opposed to the Bill, viz. the *Dainik*, the *Samaj-o-sahitya*, the *Dacca Prakash*, the *Hindu Ranjika*, the *Saraswat Patra*, the *Arya Dharma Pracharak*, the *Jessore Sammilani*, the *Burdwan Sanjivani*, the *Som Prakash*, the *Banganivasi*, the *Sahachar*, the *Pratihar*, the *Sakti*, and the *Uluberia Darpan*. And even one or two Brahmo and Baboo papers are opposed to the Bill. In the English press, the *Hindoo Patriot*, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, the *Hope*, the *National Paper*, the *National Guardian*, &c., are opposed to the Bill. Among the Hindi papers, the *Hindi Bangavasi*, the *Aryavarta*, and the *Bharat Mitra* are opposed to the Bill. It is said in some quarters that the agitation against the Bill is restricted to Bengal only. But it is not so. In Bombay and Madras too the Bill has created great sensation. The information which has been received regarding the agitation in those places is withheld for want of space. Not a day passes but reports are received from all parts of the country of meetings held to protest against the Bill.

On Wednesday last (the 25th January) a meeting of graduates was held at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, to protest against the Bill. It is gratifying to see young graduates evincing such a lively interest in their religion. The conduct of some shameless, unmannerly, and irresponsible Brahmos at the meeting was very disgraceful indeed.

There is now only one resource left to the Hindus, and that is their last resource. It is in consequence of a misconception that Government is going to strike at the root of the Hindu religion. But who is to disabuse the Government?

"O Sovereign! If you have the eyes of a god, see the torrents of tears that are flowing throughout the empire! If you have the ears of a god, hear the wailings that are about to rise in all directions throughout the empire. If you have sense, you will understand that the earth is heaving up and down as in an earthquake, and is about to be engulfed in the nether regions. But the machinations of wicked people will not allow you to see or hear or understand anything."

The writer has heard that some wicked man is getting signatures on blank paper with the object of inscribing thereon a petition in favour of the Bill, on the representation that the signatures are intended for a petition against it. The Hindus are warned against the tricks of such wicked people.

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40. The same paper says that the large number of pundits who were assembled at the meeting held in the old family dwelling-house of the Dutt family of Hathkhola unanimously came to the conclusion that the raising of the age of consent will interfere with the Hindu religion. The names of some of the most illustrious pundits who were present at the meeting are given below. Government cannot certainly say after this that the proposed law will not interfere with the Hindu religion. And if it still persists in saying so, it must do so on its *ipse dixit*. The names of the pundits are as follow:—

Mahamohopadhyaya	Bhuban Mohan Sarma.
"	Rakhaldas Deb Sarma.
"	Sriram Sarma.
"	Krishna Nath Sarma.
"	Mahesh Chandra Sarma.
"	Chandra Kanta Sarma.
Pundit Madhushudan	Sarma.
"	Jivananda Sarma, B.A.

The opinion was signed by about 150 pundits from different parts of Bengal.

41. The same paper publishes an article on the *Garbhadhan* ceremony, by Pundit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani, which has been translated into English and circulated in pamphlet form.

BANGAVASI,
Jan. 24th, 1891.

42. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 25th January, thus continues its remarks in connection with the Age of Consent Bill—

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Jan. 25th, 1891.

The opinions of the European doctors of Bengal on the subject of premature cohabitation were taken, and the fact that every one of them, in giving his opinion, alluded to the subject of early marriage, shows that it is their conviction that premature cohabitation will not be stopped so long as early marriage is not put down. They had apparently hoped that Government would put down the two customs together. And it must be admitted that the doctors took the right view of the matter, for it is absolutely impossible to tolerate the one and put down the other.

Dr. Purves is for raising the age of consent to 13, and says that the native community is in favour of the measure. The doctor is profoundly ignorant of native opinion on the subject, and has consequently made himself ridiculous by expressing himself to this effect. The opinions of the man who can express himself so recklessly are entitled to no consideration.

Dr. Chandra is of opinion that the unwillingness of girl-wives in this country to go to their husband's houses is due to their being subjected to premature cohabitation by their husbands. But does not the doctor know that these very girl-wives go into ecstasies of delight when their husbands visit them in their fathers' houses? The man who does not know this ought not to have expressed any opinion on this subject.

Dr. Raye is very right in saying that the European doctors in this country have no opportunity of knowing whether any death has been caused or is now caused by premature cohabitation. Dr. Raye, it is pleasing to note, is not a self-sufficing man.

Dr. Nicholson has collected information regarding the first appearance of menses in 68 cases. In 49 of these cases, the event occurred at 13 and in the remaining 19 cases it occurred earlier, but at what age the doctor does not say. The writer has clearly shown in previous issues of his paper that, as it is not easy to collect correct information in a matter of this kind, no reliance should be placed on Dr. Nicholson's figures.

Dr. Joubert knows that premenstrual cohabitation is prohibited in the *Sastras*, but he cannot say whether this prohibition is respected or not. He thinks it is impossible to get information on this point. And he has told the truth; for it is really impossible for an outsider to know Hindu family secrets, and those who pretend to possess any knowledge on the subject are not truthful men.

Dr. Joubert admits that, in a great many cases, conception takes place at a very early age. He has quoted the Medical Digest of 1882, and the Medical Journal of 1888, to prove that even British girls have been known to conceive at 8, 9, 10, 10 years and 11 months, 11 years and 6 months, 12, 12 years and 8 months, and 13. The writer has already quoted the opinion of Dr. Lamart on this very subject, and shown that it agrees with that of Dr. Joubert. Now when conception takes place at such an early age even in England, which is a cold country, one should be easily able to see how matters must stand in this respect in India, which is a warm country. A careful examination of the opinions given by the doctors shows that menses may and actually do occur after 10 and before 12. Doctor Gupta has shown on the authority of Dr. Harris that 4 per cent. of Hindu girls menstruate at 10, and 8 per cent. at 11. So that if the age of consent is raised to 12, *Garbhadhan* will not be performed in the case of 12 per cent. of Hindu girls. And the writer has already shown on the authority of learned pundits that grave demerit accrues from the non-performance of that ceremony. He has also shown that they do not know the *Sastras* who say that *Garbhadhan* is not prescribed in the Vedas and the ancient Smritis, that cohabitation does not form the principal part of *Garbhadhan*, and that the performance of *Garbhadhan* is not enjoined on all Hindus on the first occurrence of a certain event.

Protests are being made against the Bill in Bombay, Madras, the Punjab and Bengal, in short, all over the country. At Krishnagore a monster meeting was held at the Rajbari, and the learned pundits present at the meeting strongly protested against the Bill. The Maharaja of Nuddea, who is the head of the Hindu community of Bengal, is opposed to the proposed law. And Government surely ought, to hear what a descendant of the Maharaja Krishna Chandra has to say on a question bearing on the Hindu religion. And it will be guilty of gross wilfulness if it does not give up its *zid* in the face of so much opposition.

The British Indian Association asked for six weeks' time, and the Bill should have been accordingly referred to a Select Committee after the time prayed for. The Hindus should be given more time in connection with the Age of Consent Bill than was given to the Anglo-Indians in connection with the Ilbert Bill. The Ilbert Bill affected the interests of, at the most, only one lakh of Anglo-Indians, while this Age of Consent Bill affects the interests of 20 crores of Hindus, of whom four crores belong to Bengal alone.

BENGAL EXCHANGE,
GAZETTE,
Jan. 25th, 1891.

43. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 25th January, has the following on the Age of Consent Bill:—

Lord Lansdowne is endeavouring to erect a great memorial for himself in India. Lord Dalhousie did the same thing, but Lord Canning had to feel the consequences of his action. Will the same thing happen again?

We are astonished that the great man who is entrusted with the administration of India has suffered himself to be led away by a handful of reformers. What does Sir Andrew Scoble know of Hindu society? It can by no means be granted that his arguments are sound because he is the Law Member.

We have heard that some women who call themselves Indian women have petitioned the Queen on the subject of the Age of Consent Bill. We believe that they are not Indian women, and that it is no exaggeration to call them the disgrace of their families. Hindu society alone will not be injured by such a law. Mussulman society also is likely to be jeopardised by it, for Mussulmans, not to speak of marrying a girl who has menstruated, do not even touch her. So Government is proceeding to interfere with the religion and social customs of the two most important races in India. Is this creditable to Government?

Has Government forgotten the disaster that was on a former occasion brought on by its attempt to interfere with the religion of the Hindu and the Mussulman? Even students have protested against the proposed law. Government must admit secretly, if not publicly, that what it contemplates doing is opposed to sound statesmanship.

We have learnt by careful enquiry that the supporters of the Bill at the Albert Hall meeting were almost all Brahmos, and that Hindus opposed it. There can be no doubt that the meeting was composed of school-boys.

We have no objection to the passing of a law making cohabitation with a wife who has menstruated legal.

There can be no doubt that interference with the *garbhadhan* ceremony will be interference with the Hindu religion. According to the Sastras, the second marriage is the real marriage. It is clear that the second marriage will be interfered with by the proposed law.

Let the Viceroy pass the Bill only for those who want it, and exempt those who are opposed to it from its operation.

DACCA PRAKASH,
Jan. 25th, 1891.

44. The *Dacca Prakash*, of the 25th January, thus continues its remarks on the Age of Consent Bill—

The Age of Consent Bill.

The Bill will, if passed, destroy the domestic peace and happiness now enjoyed by the Hindus. Suppose a complaint is made against Ramdhan under the proposed law. On the receipt of the complaint the Magistrate, accompanied by his men, comes to his house for the purpose of ascertaining the truth or falsity of the charge. The scene of the offence is a Hindu zenana, and the witnesses are the mother, the sisters, the aunts and the maid-servants of Ramdhan. The Magistrate begins to take their depositions. The English law is a feelingless thing and does not respect persons, and the Magistrate accordingly takes the depositions of all the witnesses without distinction, and so the mother is compelled to give evidence regarding sexual intercourse between her son and daughter-in-law in the presence of that son and daughter-in-law, and the sister is in the same way compelled to give evidence regarding the

sexual intercourse of her brother with her sister-in-law also in their presence. What an enviable state of things this, and what a beautiful sight! But as the evidence of these witnesses is of a subsidiary nature and cannot amount to absolute and scientific proof of the fact under enquiry, medical evidence must be procured. And so the doctor *Saheb* comes into the zenana like the veritable Yama (the god of death) and a wail of agony rises in the zenana as if a death has occurred in the family. But the Magistrate must do strict justice. He is therefore a deaf man who hears not all this wailing. And the mere thought of what next takes place is such as must drive one to commit suicide, and how the poor girl and her father-in-law and mother-in-law and husband must feel on the occasion is simply indescribable. If Ramdhan is proved guilty on the result of the medical examination, his fate is sealed for ever, and he goes to swell the ranks of human beasts in a distant island. And what then becomes of the poor girl of ten, his wife? She is disgraced and outcasted, and lives a widow's life, and all this simply because she cohabited with him, who is her god, the life of her life, and the greatest among her gurus, when she wanted only one day to complete her 12th year! And if, on the other hand, the girl passes the ordeal and medical examination, and it is proved that she did not cohabit with her husband, even then she does not fare much better, for she is still outcasted. When the writer thinks of these consequences, he loses his patience and he asks himself the question, are we living in the kingdom of the mother Victoria, who is a jewel among women, who is virtuous, and who is the mother of sons and daughters themselves possessed of many virtues? Does not Government see that this Bill is like a red-hot iron rod which will pierce the very vitals of the Hindus? Government has the power to do anything it likes, but is it proper for it to use its power in this demoralising way?

In commenting on the Bill, Mr. Nulkar contented himself with saying that there was a conflict of opinions in the Sastras. But he ought to have pointed out where this conflict lay. But supposing there is a conflict in the Sastras, is it impossible to find harmony even in such conflict? The Governor-General said: I am sure the Bill will not do any violence to any of the existing religious beliefs and customs among the Hindus. But this is a mere assertion of His Excellency, and it cannot be accepted. His Excellency must prove that the Bill will do no violence to the religion of the Hindus. And Government has not adduced a tittle of proof to that effect. The evidence given in support of the Bill by six or seven Divisional Commissioners and a few native officials who are but the disciples of the *Sahebs* cannot be accepted. If Government is really anxious to act impartially in the matter, let it procure Hindu evidence. If it had said from the beginning, we consider the law to be necessary and we will have it enacted, no matter whether it injures your religion or not, the people would have had nothing to say. But it does not say that; on the contrary, it says that the law will not injure the Hindu religion. This means that it would not have brought in the Bill if it had thought that it would in any way injure the Hindu religion. And the writer can prove satisfactorily by the evidence of pundits that the law will interfere with the Hindu religion.

45. The *Som Prakash*, of the 26th January, in opposing the Age of Consent Bill, makes the following observations:—

SOM PRAKASH,
Jan. 26th, 1891.

The Age of Consent Bill.

That the ceremony of *garbhadhan* has been practised from very ancient times is proved by the references made to it in the Vedas, the Grihya Sutras, the Sanhitas and the later Smritis. Quotations are then made from the Vedas, the Grihya Sutras and other authorities. The quotation from the Grihya Parisista is to the following effect:—

The *prajapatya homa* is to be performed on the first occurrence of the menstruation in the wife, and after it has been performed both the husband and wife should put on white clothes and perform the sexual act at night in a sweetly perfumed room, &c. This clearly shows that *garbhadhan* is to be performed on the first occurrence of menstruation. Parasara is then quoted to show that grave demerit accrues from the non-performance of *garbhadhan*. According to that authority he who does not perform it becomes guilty of the murder of children and cows. The extract from the Grihya Parisista quoted above is as follows:—

অর্থং যত্যা: প্রাজাপত্যং যতৌ প্রথমে অমুকুলে। ইতি স্মৃতিয়াঃ নারকঃ প্রাজাপত্যস্য
হালীপাকস্য হত্বা নিশি স্বলঙ্ঘ্যে স্মৃগন্ধবাসিতে বেশ্মনি যথাভূতে পর্ষাকৃত্তে স্মৃতিয়াঃ
শুরুবসনাং.....তথাভূত প্রবেশ্য উপগচ্ছেৎ।

“যদা কৃতুমতী ভবতাপরতশাণিতা তদা সম্ভবকালঃ” Gobhila.

“The time for cohabitation is when the menstrual flow has ceased.”

GRAMVASI,
Jan. 26th, 1891.

The Age of Consent Bill.

46. The *Grāmvasī*, of the 26th January, thus remarks on the Age of Consent Bill:—

1. Some think that the Bill will, if passed, destroy the domestic happiness of the Hindus, while others think that it will be a dead-letter. Now the writer is of opinion that the fear that the violation of the law will destroy the sanctity of the homes will have a salutary effect and make the guardians of boys and girls careful in bringing them together. As to those who hold the second view, why do they object to the proposed law if they think that it will remain a dead-letter?

2. Some are of opinion that instead of fixing an age of consent, girls should be made competent to give their consent whenever they commence to menstruate. This proposal does not commend itself to the writer, who thinks that the proper age of consent should be fixed after consulting doctors, kabirajes, and hakims (Mussulman physicians). The writer approves of the proposal made by some that no girl should be declared fit for cohabitation with one who is not her husband until she has attained her majority, and draws the attention of Government to it.

DACCA GAZETTE,
Jan. 26th, 1891.

47. The *Dacca Gazette*, of the 26th January, says that the intention of Government in introducing the Age of Consent Bill is not to interfere with the performance of the

garbhadhan ceremony, but to make provision for the proper performance of it by suppressing premature consummation of marriage. The alarm raised is quite unfounded, as girls in this country seldom attain puberty before the age of twelve, and then only in cases which must be characterised as unnatural. Generally speaking, the twelfth year is the age of attainment of puberty in girls of this country. It must be explicitly understood that the proposed amendment is intended solely for suppressing the evil practice above alluded to; and anyone who opposes it is either a hypocrite or ignorant of the circumstances of the country, for it is very seldom that the *garbhadhan* ceremony is at all performed, or at all events properly performed, the consummation having taken place long before the attainment of puberty. Moreover, the non-performance of the ceremony is not considered sinful if the girl is unmarried or if her husband is prevented from performing it by reason of being detained in jail. Under these circumstances, why should the postponement of the marriage of a girl by force of law be considered a sin? There is little fear that the proposed amendment will really affect any orthodox Hindu family, for no such family now exists. The only people who will be most affected by it will be the noble families of Calcutta, the girls in which families generally attain puberty at a very early age, through the vice of premature consummation having run through the families for several generations. The *mofussil* people have little to fear from the Bill, as girls there are seldom even married before the age of twelve. The only danger to be apprehended is oppression by the police, and when safeguards have been provided against that contingency, there is nothing to object to in the Bill. It is thus evident that the masses can have nothing to do with the present agitation. It is urged from some quarters that the age of consent had rather be fixed at the attainment of puberty in the case of each girl, instead of setting an age limit. But if that course is adopted, the evil the legislature is endeavouring to cope with will remain unchecked, nay, it will flourish with greater strength than ever, as then fictitious *garbhadhan* ceremonies will become very prevalent for the purpose of giving husbands the opportunity of cohabiting with their girl-wives in open violation of the law. The passing of the Bill will no doubt bring about a revolution in Calcutta society, and unhappy quarrels will for some time to come frequently occur between husbands and the parents of girls, but there is no help for it if the torrent of vice that is flowing in that society is to be checked. A few years will settle everything. As for interference with religion, may it be asked how many Hindus of to-day properly perform the ten *sanskars* enjoined by the *Sastras*?

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Jan. 26th 1891.

48. The *Dainik-o-Samāchār Chandrikā*, of the 26th January, thus criticises Nawab Ashanulla's speech in the Legislative Council:—

India is inhabited by not less than fifty millions of Mahomedans. And it is absurd to suppose that Nawab Ashanulla can speak

for the whole of this large population. The Madras Mahomedans are, for instance, staunch opponents of the Bill, and there are among them men of higher social position than Nawab Ashanulla. Nawab Ashanulla says that the Mahomedans of East Bengal are alarmed, but the Viceroy's assurance that no religious interference is intended will remove their fears. This means that the Nawab himself is not without his fears.

The Viceroy meant to allay the fears of both the Hindus and the Mahomedans when he gave the assurance that Government did not intend to interfere with the custom of early marriage. The Hindus, it has been shown, have refused to be consoled by this assurance, because they are quite sure that the raising of the age of consent will interfere with early marriage. That the Mahomedans, too, have reason to fear a violation of their religion from the passing of the Bill can be easily proved. Mr. Allen, District Magistrate of Noakhali, has said that the Mahomedan law fixes the earliest possible age of puberty in a woman at the ninth year. And Nawab Ashanulla himself has admitted that Indian women generally attain puberty at 11 or 12, and in some cases even earlier. The Nawab must therefore admit, on his own authority and on the authority of the Mahomedan law, that Indian women attain puberty between the ninth and the twelfth years. The passing of the Bill will therefore necessitate the postponement of consummation for one, two, three or four years, as the case may be. And the Madras Mahomedans say that this delay in the consummation of marriage will interfere with their religion, and that it will, in many cases, throw serious obstacles in the way of the children, who may be born later, succeeding to their paternal property.

The writer has no knowledge of the Mahomedan religion, but he is prepared to say from what can be ascertained from the Mahomedans themselves, that interference with the custom of early marriage will amount to interference with the Mahomedan religion. And it is clear that the raising of the age of consent will necessitate a proportionate raising of the age of marriage. It is clear from the Nawab's own words, "without directly violating or interfering with religious rites or customs," that he will not deny that the passing of the Bill will interfere at least indirectly with those rites and customs. The Nawab's speech, replete as it is with qualifications, drives one to the conclusion that the Nawab himself will not deny that the passing of the Bill is calculated to interfere with the Mahomedan religion.

49. Referring to a statement which is being circulated, to the effect that the *Sabdakalpadruma* and the *Garbhadhan* ceremony. the *Sabdakalpadruma* compiled by the late Raja Radhakanta Deb Bahadoor, does not enjoin the performance of the *Garbhadhan* ceremony immediately after the first menses, the same paper says that Pundit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani has clearly explained that the menses alluded to in the *Sabdakalpadruma* in the article on *Garbhadhan* are the first menses. The late Rajah Radhakant was an opponent of widow marriage and acknowledged the compulsory character of the *Garbhadhan* ceremony. It is, therefore, much to be regretted that some of his descendants are to-day trying to make it out that his monumental work is a non-Hindu work. It would be foolish to think that Raja Rajendra Narayan Deb, son of the late Raja Radhakant, has anything to do with the circulation of the un-Hindu opinions that are being falsely ascribed to his illustrious father.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Jan. 26th, 1891.

50. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 27th January, thus continues its remarks on the Age of Consent Bill—

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Jan. 27th, 1891.

The writer approves of what was said by Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter in the course of his speech on the Bill. The Hindu law-givers cannot even conceive the idea that a husband can be guilty of rape on his own wife, and if the Penal Code of 1860 had been framed by Hindu law-givers the present 10-year law would not have found a place in it. The conjugal relation is not in the eye of the Hindu what it is in the eye of the Englishman. One who is not a Hindu cannot even conceive what a pure thing is the conjugal relation in the eye of the Hindu. The English rulers are gradually introducing unholiness into the Hindu conjugal relation. Any raising of the age of consent will place difficulties in the way of early marriage and thereby taint the entire marriage system of the Hindus. It is owing to Englishmen that Hindu society has in many respects and many directions, already ceased to be the pure thing it once was. The conjugal

relation has also become impure in many cases, and the proposed law will prove its ruin. The idea that a Hindu husband can be guilty of rape on his own wife is, notwithstanding its promulgation in the Penal Code, still unintelligible to 15 annas among the Hindus. According to them, the husband is the protector and supporter of the wife. The Hindu husband is always solicitous for the welfare of his wife, not only in this world, but also in the next. And he is not a Hindu who knowingly commits oppression on his girl wife. Hari Maiti is an *asur* (demon) and it can hardly be proper to hold the whole Hindu community, consisting of 20 crores of men, responsible for the misdeed of a single *asur*. If the object of the measure be to make the race strong, surely it will not be attained by raising the age of consent to 12. Lord Lansdowne also sees this, and that is why he says that the age of consent is being raised to 12 *only for the present*, that is to say, it will be raised above 12 hereafter. The age of consent was fixed at 10 thirty years ago, it is now being raised to 12, and after another thirty years it will be raised to 14. No, not in another thirty years, but in another ten years; for in these days English education and English civilisation are spreading in the country in geometrical progression. If Lord Lansdowne gives his word that the intention of Government is not to raise the age of consent to 14 or 16, but to fix it for all times at 12, then the Hindu religion will be unnecessarily injured. If, on the other hand, His Excellency says that the present is only a temporary measure, and that in the course of time the age of consent will be raised to 16, then the ruin of the Hindu religion and Hindu society will be inevitable. And either of these two things must happen. Lord Lansdowne would not have proposed the measure if he had not been blinded by the conviction that everything English is good and everything Indian is bad. / Mischief like the one which threatens Hindu society must occur whenever the laws of a country are made by foreigners or by people who are alien in faith. As to Mr. Nulkar, he is a Hindu only in name.

India is not England, and the people of India are not so spirited as the people of England. Nor is India a free country like England. It is for this reason that the Governor-General of India can do and dares to do anything he likes. The same cause also accounts for the undue severity of the Indian Penal Code compared with the English Penal Code, and for the distinction of black and white which is made in the Indian law.

Lord Lansdowne is attempting to pass the Bill in hot haste, and will probably succeed in doing so. But if India had been England, not even the Prime Minister would have dared even to conceive a Bill of this nature. The people of England are in favour of marriage with a deceased wife's sister. Her Majesty the Queen herself, the members of the Royal family, and many of the members of Parliament, are also in its favour, and yet the Bill legalising such marriage is being rejected year after year, simply because there is a faint smell of the Bible in the matter. Marriage with a deceased wife's sister will, if legalised, do much good and prevent much evil by checking foeticide, and yet it is being opposed in the name of religion with which it has only a remote connection. But, here in India, though the Age of Consent Bill will deal a severe blow to the religion of innumerable Hindus, yet Lord Lansdowne is anxious to pass it. But it certainly looks very ungracious in His Excellency, in whose country a measure so beneficial as a law legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister meets with so much opposition, to try to prevent the consummation of marriage among Hindus. Some Anglo-Indian writers are astonished at Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter's reference to the cremation question in England. They say that the reference would have been appropriate if there had been any cruelty in the English burial system. But though not cruel directly, it is indirectly so, inasmuch as it is a cause of insanitation to people who live near burial-grounds. Nay, it is directly cruel, too; for, as the Socialists say, burial-grounds take up large tracts of land which would otherwise produce food for lakhs of poor men. But the fact is that the point of the analogy turns not on cruelty, but on religion. For while the substitution of cremation for burial will do very little injury to the religion of the Christians, the prevention of *garbhadhan* will shatter the foundations of the Hindu religion. There will be rebellion in England if any attempt is made to abolish burial by force of law. But here Government has no fear of rebellion; and even if rebellion occurs here it will do more harm to the people themselves than to anyone else. And this

is why the authorities here venture to manufacture trouble and difficulty at every step.

The writer has learnt that the Law Member is taking the opinions of a few men on the Bill. But those who have been consulted by him are nobodies in the eyes of the Hindus, and are not competent to give impartial advice in the matter. The Law Member should consult the learned Pundits of Navadvipa, Bhatpara, and other places, or he may consult the British Indian Association. But he will surely find himself in a mess if he secretly takes the advice of men who are nobodies.

51. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 28th January, has the following on Mr. Nulkar's speech in the Legislative Council:—

Mr. Nulkar on the Age of Consent Bill.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Jan. 28th, 1891.

Mr. Nulkar, the Member for the Bombay Presidency, though belonging to the Hindu community, is a thorough-going reformer. Mr. Nulkar is in Bombay what Vidyasagar is in Bengal and Dewan Raghunath is in Madras. They are all Hindus, but not Hindus in the sense in which orthodox Hindus take that word.

Mr. Nulkar said in the Legislative Council that the texts of the Hindu Sastras relating to marriage and *garbhadhan* are very contradictory, and that, so far as he was aware, the courts of law decide cases in accordance with the custom which is most generally accepted and acted upon. But that there is no conflict in the Sastras about the *garbhadhan* ceremony at least, has been clearly shown in this paper and by Pundit Sasadhar Tarkachuramani. The small differences that are observable in the performance of this ceremony, and which arise from provincial peculiarities, are easily reconcileable. Mr. Nulkar can speak only for the Hindu community of Bombay. But *Native Opinion* of Bombay itself says that the Sastras most prevalent in that Presidency, namely, the *Dharma Sindhu* and the *Sanskara Kaustubha*, absolutely enjoin the performance of the *garbhadhan* ceremony. The rule laid down in these two Bombay Smritis is identical with that laid down in the twenty-eighth tattwa of Raghunandan in Bengal. It is impossible for an alien ruler to enter into the spirit of the Hindu Sastras. And it is equally impossible for anglicised Babus like Nulkar or Raghunath to grasp the real sense of those Sastras.

Mr. Nulkar ought to have clearly explained what he meant by the "custom most generally accepted." It is a custom with high-caste Hindu widows all over India to fast on the *ekadasi* day. In Bengal the widows keep the fast so rigorously as not to take even a drop of water for a whole day. That is the rule and that is the custom in Bengal. But in many other provinces the widows, though they keep the fast, do not fast one whole day. They keep the fast only for one *tithi* or lunar day, and so it comes to this, that the *Ekadasi* fast is observed in all the Indian provinces, and the only difference noticeable in its observance is that in Bengal it is observed for a whole solar day, whilst in other places it is observed only for a whole lunar day. And will Mr. Nulkar argue that there is conflict of opinion in the Sastras about the observance of the *Ekadasi* fast? The Sastras are the same everywhere, the little differences that are observable in practice being easily reconciled. And even if these small differences were not reconcileable, that would be no reason why only the most prevalent form of a custom should be recognized, for if that course were adopted, the form in which the *Ekadasi* fast is observed in Bengal would have to be abolished.

But Mr. Nulkar was compelled to contradict himself when he saw the danger of insisting on the theory he had enunciated of the courts taking as authority that form of a custom which was most generally accepted. He saw that his insisting on this view would be a serious obstacle in his way, because the performance of *garbhadhan* after the first menses was the custom most prevalent in Bengal. Mr. Nulkar, therefore, took shelter in the argument that though the most generally accepted form of a custom is to be considered as authority by the courts, yet it cannot be denied that in following this course the courts have often to give their sanction to very cruel customs. He therefore thought that it was the duty of the legislature to put down such customs by law.

The man who can thus mislead the Government by the help of such desperate logic ought not certainly to have a place in the Legislative Council. For he is not a far-sighted man who is not afraid of displeasing the forty or fifty millions of Bengali Hindus by inflicting wounds on their religion. The people of

Bombay do not perhaps look upon the Hindus of Bengal as human beings. Government should know that the appointment of a man of Mr. Nulkar's rash and thoughtless disposition to the Legislative Council might be fraught with danger.

Mr. Nulkar assured the Viceroy that the agitation against the proposed law would cease with the passing of the Bill, and that Government need not therefore pay any heed to it. No other member of the Council could show the indiscretion that Mr. Nulkar did by giving this assurance to the Viceroy. The Viceroy himself spoke with greater caution than Mr. Nulkar. It is Mr. Nulkar's belief that none but the weak Hindus of Bengal will be displeased at the passing of the Bill. But why this Bill alone; any Bill may be passed by force, and yet the Hindus of Bengal will not rebel. Government may compel all Hindu widows to re-marry, and yet the Hindus of Bengal will not rebel. The Hindus of Bengal are of a very different stuff from the people of Maharashtra. The Hindus of Bengal do not trace their origin to the stock from which Mr. Nulkar is descended. The people of Mr. Nulkar's own community would be likely to rebel if any law opposed to religion or the Shastras were passed, but nothing will incite the Hindus of Bengal to rebellion. As has been already said, it is Mr. Nulkar's firm belief that the passing of the present Bill will not offend the Hindus of Maharashtra, and the only people who will be offended are the weak Bengalis, and Government need not fear giving offence to the latter. But *Native Opinion* of Bombay says that a large number of the Maharashtra people, too, will be displeased if the Bill is passed. And what does Mr. Nulkar say to this?

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Jan. 28th, 1891.

52. The same paper says that the opinion expressed by Baboo Jogendra Nath Bhattacharyya on the Age of consent Bill, in a recent issue of *Reis and Raiyat*, is as worthless as Baboo opinions generally are. The Baboo will no doubt be taught a lesson by the pundits of Nuddea.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Jan. 29th, 1891.

53. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 29th January, has the following in connection with the age of consent question:—The Editor of the *Pioneer* is an Englishman, and as he is the son of the Military member of the Viceregal Council, he is valorous to a degree. He has thought fit to remind the people of this country of what Sir Charles Napier said to the Hindus of Scinde when they asked him not to put down *suttee*. Of course, the Editor of the *Pioneer*, can say after the Mutiny what Napier said before it. But neither the Viceroy nor any modern Napier could make use of such words. If Lord Lansdowne had expressed himself in the careless manner of the Editor of the *Pioneer* he would have to resign his office immediately. The words of the Editor of the *Pioneer* will no doubt astound experienced Englishmen, and put them in mind of the Cawnpore affair.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

CALCUTTA AL
PUNCH,
Jan. 11th, 1891.

54. The *Calcutta Al Punch*, of the 11th January, says that if Lord Lansdowne desires the popularity which Lord Ripon gained among the people of India, he should order that all masjids and Hindu temples should be lighted at the expense of Government.

HINDI BANGAVASI,
Jan. 12th, 1891.

55. The *Hindi Bangavasi*, of the 12th January, says that the breaches in the embankments in Chupra caused great damage to the crops during the last rainy season. The embankments ought to be repaired before the setting in of the next rains.

SUDHAKAR,
Jan. 16th, 1891.

56. The *Sudhakar*, of the 16th January, has the following in an article headed "The causes of the present degraded condition of the Mahomedans and how to remove them":—It is of course unreasonable to suppose that the Mahomedans have suffered nothing by the downfall of their political power. But that downfall is not the only cause of their present degraded condition. The slow progress which English education is making among the Mahomedan community is another principal cause of their degradation.

Why is it that the number of Mahomedan zemindars in Bengal is so small? It is because towards the close of the Mahomedan rule in that province the

Nawabs vested the power of collecting revenue principally in Hindu revenue officers, who consequently came to be recognised as zemindars at the time of the Permanent Settlement.

During the latter part of the Mahomedan rule and the early period of British rule in Bengal, the Mahomedans were very largely employed in the work of administration of justice and as executive officers and also in other branches of the public service, the reason of their preferment being that a great part of the public business was then conducted in the Persian language. But times changed, and English took the place of Persian as the language of the courts and as the language for the transaction of public business. The Hindus, who made greater progress in the study of English, therefore ousted the Mahomedans from the public offices. The change of language struck a fatal blow at Mahomedan progress, and the Mahomedans degenerated more and more as time passed on. The unwillingness of the Mahomedans to give their sons English education was due to their fear lest they should be converted to Christianity, as some English-educated Hindu youths were in the earliest days of English education in this country.

57. The same paper has the following:—"Will not the lifeless Mahomedans of Bengal once more grow frantic at the name of religion? Will any Mahomedan grudge to pay into the Islam Mission Fund a month's income? The cry 'None,' 'None' is already reaching the writer's ears. Why, then, waste time? Let every one gird up his loins and devote himself life and soul to the service of God. The editor of this paper has promised Maulavi Makbul Ali a month's income for the Islam Mission Fund, and he invites all the Bengal Mussulmans to join the movement. The editor is confident that no Mussulman will be so hard-hearted as not to respond to this call of religion."

SUDHAKAR,
Jan. 16th, 1891.

58. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 16th January, says that though the English themselves use nothing but liquor as an intoxicant, they yet do their best to introduce every sort of intoxicant into this country as a profitable source of revenue. They thus make every Indian, young and old, male and female, use some intoxicating drug or other. Just calculate the quantity of drugs that must be sold in order to find money to pay the salary of the Viceroy, and then there are the fat salaries of the members of his Council, which have also to be raised from revenue. Every Englishman, in fact, comes to India in the shape of a *rakshasa* to lay hands on any amount of money he can find. And the best means of raising money is to induce India's people to use intoxicants in large quantities.

BENGAL EXCHANGE
GAZETTE,
Jan. 16th, 1891.

59. The *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 20th January, approves of the intention of Government to have only one manager for the Burdwan Raj Estate, and thinks that the estate will be better managed if that intention is given effect to.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
Jan. 20th, 1890.

60. The *Sahachar*, of the 21st January, has the following on the subject of the Cesarewitch's reception by the Viceroy:—
When his Majesty the King of Siam came to Calcutta, Lord Mayo, the then Governor-General of India, received him standing at the top of the grand staircase, while the Lieutenant-Governor stood below it. But the present Governor-General contemplates receiving the Cesarewitch at the Howrah station. Considering that His Excellency is the first potentate in Asia and the representative of the Queen-Empress, this arrangement does not meet with the approval of the writer. Courtesy is no doubt a good thing, but the honour of India and the Queen-Empress should be first considered. It would have been enough if the Governor-General had received the Cesarewitch standing below the grandstaircase.

SAHACHAR,
Jan. 21st, 1891.

61. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 22nd January, has the following in an article headed "Oppression by Sahebs":—

BENGAL EXCHANGE
GAZETTE
Jan. 22nd, 1891.

The oppression of white monkeys on black natives is becoming more terrible day after day, and will no steps be taken to put it down? Will the officers of Government take no steps to stop the increase of this fiendish oppression? Recently two English fiends, Messrs. Don and Mackay by name, set some dogs on Mr. Dubass, a native gentleman of Bombay, and enjoyed the fun as the man was bitten by them and cried loudly in pain.

Reference is then made to the story of cannibalism and other revelations made by Mr. Stanley, and the following remarks are made:—

There are really among Englishmen hundreds of such *rakshasas* in human shape, as snatch away wives from their husbands' arms and forcibly satisfy their beastly passion, and by that means kill a good many of them; as kill natives on the slightest provocation; as strike gentlemen with canes without any provocation; as violate the chastity of helpless women. And unfortunately for the people of this country, it is Englishmen of this type that come out here in large numbers. Who does not know the kind of men the English indigo-planters and tea-planters are? It often becomes difficult to believe that these men possess the attributes of humanity. If kind-hearted Englishmen like Mr. Stanley had now been living in this country, then the people would have found many friends among the home public. If the news of misdeeds of these beasts in human shape had reached England, the country, that is, where women swooned on hearing the story of the oppressions of Devi Singh, some steps would certainly have been taken to bring them to justice.

People here are therefore quietly suffering all kinds of oppression, leaving it to God to deal out justice to these oppressors, and are afraid even to agitate publicly on the subject, for they know that the large-hearted Mr. Long was imprisoned for having translated the Bengali drama *Nil Darpan*. But forbearance of this kind will no longer do, for Englishmen may take advantage of it and try to exterminate the natives of this country in the same manner as the Americans have exterminated the Red Indians, and the Australian colonists the native races of that continent. Considering that Englishmen have very nearly exterminated the native races of the countries where they have set foot, who shall say that they will not in the course of time try to exterminate the people of India? The people of this country will surely find themselves in a deplorable condition if they do not from this time make special efforts to maintain their existence as a nation, do not resist the oppressions of the Europeans, and do not combine among themselves for that purpose. The writer thinks that the people of this country may obtain the sympathy of many high-minded Englishmen if some patriotic native gentleman collects in a book form the cases of oppression which are committed by low Englishmen, and publishes a translation of the book in England.

BANGAVASI,
Jan. 24th, 1891.

62. The *Bangavasi*, of the 24th January, has learnt that cholera is still raging violently in Bazitpore in the Furreedpore district. About four hundred people have already fallen victims to it, and large numbers of men are leaving the village. The few lives that have been spared might yet be saved if Government would send a doctor to the village.

SANJIVANI,
Jan. 24th, 1891.

63. The *Sanjivani*, of the 24th January, asks if the authorities will enquire into the cases of unlawful *zulm* in collecting subscriptions, a list of which has been published by the *Statesman* newspaper. It may not be wrong for the mofussil officials to ask for subscriptions from the people for good objects. But is it proper to extort money from them for any purpose, however good? It is said that in a certain case the amount received was not wholly devoted to the purpose for which it was paid. The writer himself knows of cases in which people had to pay money for public objects simply through fear of incurring the displeasure of the officials. Government should adopt means to protect the people of the mofussil from such *zulm* on the part of its officials.

ASSAM PAPERS.

SRIHATTA MIHIR,
Jan. 19th, 1891.

64. The *Srihatta Mihir*, of the 19th January, gives the following story regarding the District Superintendent of Police, Sylhet:—

The District Superintendent of Police, Sylhet.

The District Superintendent sent a letter to Baboo Kunja Krisna De, head-master, Akhatia school, appointing him honorary Census Inspector. Kunja Baboo sent the letter back with the remark that as he would be going on a pilgrimage in the middle of the month of January, he was unable to accept the office. Thereupon the Superintendent wrote in reply: "This is all nonsense. He must postpone his pilgrimage." Does not the use

of such language prove the justice of the remark that police officers do not know civility?

The Age of Consent Bill.

65. A letter, from which the following is an extract, appears in the same paper in connection with the Age of Consent Bill:—

SRIHATTA MIHIR,
Jan. 19th, 1891.

"There is one very important phase of the Bill to which I have not yet referred. The Hon'ble member in charge of the Bill has so cleverly put his case before the public that it is impossible to say that the Bill is not intended for the Hindus alone. That this Bill will affect not only the marriage law of the Hindu, but also that of the Mahomedan community, any one who has the slightest idea of what the Mahomedan law is on the subject very well knows. It is a well established fact that a Mahomedan girl can be given away in marriage, even at the age of nine, by her lawful guardian, and it is at the discretion of the girl to ratify the contract entered into by her guardian in her behalf whenever she reaches her puberty. Now supposing that a Mahomedan girl does reach her puberty before her twelfth year, it is perfectly lawful for the husband to consummate the marriage with her consent. But the hon'ble Mr. Scoble, by making it a purely Hindu question, has thrown dust into the eyes of the two Mahomedan members of the Council, and the result has been that none of them said anything either for or against it. I am sure those two Mahomedan members would have vehemently opposed the Bill, but for the clever way in which the proposer of the Bill managed his case.

That this Bill, if passed into law, will have a very mischievous effect upon the country there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. The safeguard of making the offence non-cognisable will hardly protect the sacredness of our homes. Especially will it be the case with the comparatively lower classes of our society, who will be at the mercy of every petty village intriguer on the one hand and of the village zemindar on the other. Indirectly for the country at large there is no knowing when the Government may interfere with the other religious rights and privileges of its people. The Government will always put forward some specious arguments, as in the present case, in order to smother public opposition; for it seems to be determined to break the Queen's Proclamation of 1857. Let then Hindus and Mahomedans alike unite and raise one unanimous voice of protest against the present Bill. There is no time to be lost.—*B. M. Palit, Sylhet.*"

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

The 31st January 1891.

